UNITED NATIONS

Daily Highlights

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MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* Yitzhak Rabin knew war and fought for peace and reconciliation, Secretary-General says in tribute to slain Prime Minister of Israel.

* General Assembly eulogizes Israel's assassinated Prime Minister.

* Security Council calls on Tajik parties to begin as matter of urgency, the continual round of talks with aim of concluding general agreement.

* International Commission of Inquiry will investigate reports of military training and arms transfer to Rwanda.

* International Task Force investigates mysterious epidemic in Nicaragua.

* UNEP and Smithsonian Institution join forces to fight for the environment.

* Economic and Financial Committee recommends General Assembly urge creditor countries implement debt strategies that lead to a durable solution.

* Representatives tell Legal Committee membership of Security Council is key factor in plan for World Criminal Court.

* Special Political and Decolonization Committee recommends General Assembly reaffirm that remaining 12 Non-Governing Territories ultimately determine own political status.

* UNESCO Director-General stresses important role of education in society, as General Conference approves Organization's programme and budget.

* Kofi Annan, Special Envoy to the Former Yugoslavia and NATO, takes up post.

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Yitzak Rabin knew war and fought tirelessly for peace and reconciliation so that "our children, and our children's children will no longer experience the painful cost of war", Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said this morning in Jerusalem, at the funeral of assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Rabin.

That goal, said Mr. Boutros-Ghali, should be our goal. It was the goal of the United Nations.

Earlier, on Saturday, the Secretary-General expressed profound shock and sadness on hearing of the assassination of Prime Minister Rabin. In a statement, he condemned the outrageous act of terror saying it had struck down one of the greatest leaders in Israel's history.

The Secretary-General paid tribute to the late Prime Minister's wisdom and vision for his unswerving commitment to his country, and recognition of the need for Israelis and Arabs alike to put behind the hostility and bloodshed - personal characteristics which, the Secretary-General said, led to the peace treaty between Israel and Jordan and the agreement between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organization.

Prime Minister Rabin, would "forever be remembered for his courageous leadership", the Secretary-General concluded.

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The General Assembly this morning paid tribute to assassinated Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin. Representatives of the various geographical groups at the United Nations expressed sadness and condemned the terrorist act. However, they all called for the peace process to continue.

General Assembly President Diogo Freitas do Amaral said Mr. Rabin had chosen to lead his people down the path towards lasting peace in the Middle East and for this he had made the ultimate sacrifice. It was only two weeks ago that the reaffirmation of Mr. Rabin to the cause of peace resonated in this very chamber, he said. The Assembly President said it was our fervent hope that Yitzhak Rabin's life would not have been sacrificed in vain and that the international community and peoples of the world would be inspired by Mr. Rabin to abandon war and violence and to embrace peace.

Responding to condolences from the regional groups, the Deputy Permanent Representative of Israel, Ambassador David Peleg said the assassin's bullet that killed the prime minister was an attempt to stop the courageous march towards peace for all the people of the Middle East. The Government of Israel was fully committed to continue in its efforts towards reaching a comprehensive and lasting peace with all of its neighbours. "An assassin's

bullet will not halt our efforts to achieve what Prime Minister Rabin had so boldly set out to accomplish," he said.

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The Security Council has called upon the Tajik parties to begin as a matter of urgency, the continual round of talks with the aim of concluding a general agreement. This would be in accordance with the provisions of the Protocol on the fundamental principles for establishing peace and national accord in Tajikistan signed by the President of Tajikistan and the leader of the Tajik opposition this past August.

In a presidential statement, the Council expressed the hope that the Secretary-General's Special Envoy would be able to resume promptly his efforts with regard to the preparation of the forthcoming round of talks. The Council also welcomed the planned convening of the continual round of Inter-Tajik talks in Ashgabad.

Council President for the month of November, Ambassador Salim Mohammed Al-Khussaiby of Oman, on behalf of the Council urged the Tajik parties to comply strictly with the obligations assumed under the agreement on a temporary ceasefire and the cessation of other hostile acts on the Tajik-Afghan border and within the country, signed in Teheran on 17 September 1994. The Council expressed the hope that the convening of the talks would contribute to a lessening of tensions along the Tajik-Afghan border and inside Tajikistan.

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The International Commission of Inquiry to investigate reports of military training and arms transfer to former Rwandese government forces will visit Burundi, Rwanda, Uganda, the United Republic of Tanzania and Zaire in pursuit of its mandate.

The Commission would: collect information and investigate reports relating to the allegations as well as underlying motives; identify those involved and recommend measures to end such illegal activities, which are in violation of relevant Security Council resolutions.

The Security Council had called on all states to render all necessary cooperation to the Commission, which was scheduled to arrive in Rwanda today.

Subsequent to its investigation, the International Commission would submit an interim report to the Secretary-General within three months and a final report as soon as possible thereafter.

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The World Health Organization (WHO) through its Regional Office for the Americas (AMRO/PAHO) together with an international team of epidemiologists from Cuba and the United States, has been working in Nicaragua to identify an unknown disease that has struck more than 1,000 people and led to 15 deaths.

The experts were conducting epidemiological investigations in the Achuapa region, about 100 kilometres north-west of Managua, where the first cases of the outbreak were reported. There was no confirmation of reports that the disease had spread to Honduras and the WHO did not consider that travel restrictions to Nicaragua were necessary.

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The United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Smithsonian Institution have signed an agreement to establish formal links between their programmes in fields such as tropical forestry, biological diversity, climate change, marine and fresh water resources, dryland management, environmental assessment and data networking, data-base development and public and technical information awareness.

The Smithsonian Institution would provide UNEP with scientific input for its Commission on Sustainable Development, and one of its senior officials would become the senior scientific advisor to the Executive Director of UNEP. The agreement also called for joint programmes to increase public awareness on the status of the ecosystems and their management.

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The General Assembly would urge creditor countries, multilateral institutions and commercial banks to ensure that the debt strategy was fully taken into account in the implementation of measures towards a durable solution to the external debt problem of developing countries, under the terms of one of two draft resolutions approved by the Second Committee (Economic and Financial) on Friday. The draft was sponsored by the "Group of 77" developing countries and China and by the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The draft would also have the Assembly stress the need of encouraging private flows to developing countries while reducing the systemic risk of volatility. It would urge developing countries to phase out subsidies for uncompetitive industries, particularly agriculture, and dismantle protectionist barriers targeted at developing countries.

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The Sixth Committee (Legal) has been continuing deliberations on the establishment of an International Criminal Court. Representatives said that

the relationship between the proposed criminal court and the Security Council would be a key factor in the establishment of the Court.

The representative of Iran said that while the Charter of the United Nations had entrusted the Security Council with primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, that should not be allowed to hinder the functioning of the court.

The representative of India suggested deleting reference to the Security Council from the court's draft statute. "The court should not be engaged in any case if the same is already under consideration of the Council", he said.

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The General Assembly would reaffirm that the people in the remaining 12 Non-Self-Governing Territories must ultimately determine freely their political status, according to a draft resolution approved by the Fourth Committee (Special Political and Decolonization) on Friday. The draft was approved, as a whole, by a vote of 124 in favour to 4 against (Georgia, Israel, United Kingdom and United States), with 6 abstentions (Argentina, Belgium, France, Haiti, Morocco and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia).

The draft also called for environmental protection measures, measures to combat drug trafficking and money laundering and the facilitation of the dispatch of United Nations visiting missions.

The 12 Territories covered were American Samoa, Anguilla, Bermuda, the British Virgin Islands, the Cayman Islands, Guam, Montserrat, Pitcairn, St. Helena, Tokelau, Turks and Caicos Islands and the United States Virgin Islands.

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Delegates to the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have approved the Organization's 1996-1997 programme and budget and given their support for the Medium-Term Strategy. The Strategy called for intensified activity in the fields of basic education, lifelong learning and literacy.

UNESCO Director-General Federico Mayor said that education, in its broadest sense, was the thread that wove together the strands at the centre of the Organization's mission: to promote a culture of peace that embraces justice, democracy and tolerance. Therefore, he said, education was "the priority of priorities."

UNESCO Deputy Director-General Adnan Badran presented the UNESCO environment and four science prizes to recognize significant contributions in

computer programming, microbiology, physical chemistry, the popularization of science and environmental conservation.

Xuan Wang, a chinese computer scientist credited with revolutionizing his country's publishing and newspaper industry, received the 1995 UNESCO Science Prize.

The 1995 Carlos Finlay Prize for Microbiology went to French biologist Pascale Cossart and Belgian biochemist Jan Balzarini. Pascale Cossart leads the bacterial and cellular interaction unit at the Pasteur Institute in Paris, France. Jan Balzarini is a professor in the laboratory of virology and chemotherapy at the Rega Institute for Medical Research of Katholieke University in Leuven, Belgium. He is a recognized leader in cancer and AIDS research.

The 1995 Kalinga Prize for the Popularization of Science was awarded to Mexican astrophysicist Julieta Norma Fierro Gossman, a researcher at the National University of Mexico and a noted scholar on galaxies, planetary nebulae, asteroids and comets.

The Javed Husain Young Scientists Prize for 1995 was awarded to Mexican chemist Maria Lopez Goeme, described by the director of University of Mexico's Institute of Physics, as "a world leader in Sol-Gel catalysis".

The Lake Malawi National Park in Malawi received the US$200,000 Sultan Qaboos Prize for 1995 for Preservation of the Environment. A UNESCO World Heritage Site since 1984, Lake Malawi is widely praised as a model for ecotourism.

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The United Nations had been doing very serious work and during the last few years the objective had been to try and contain the situation in the former Yugoslavia and to provide an opportunity for the diplomatic process to go forward, said Kofi Annan, the newly appointed Special Representative of Secretary-General to the Former Yugoslavia.

Mr. Annan who is also the special representative to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, NATO, was speaking to correspondents on his arrival at Zagreb to take up his assignment. He had already held meetings in London, Paris, Moscow and NATO headquarters in Brussels. He was expected to hold consultations this week with leaders in the region after their return from peace talks in the United States.

Mr. Kofi Annan takes over from Mr. Yasushi Akashi, who has been the Special Representative for almost two years. Before taking up his new duties, Mr. Annan had been Under-Secretary-General for Peace-Keeping Operations at United Nations Headquarters in New York.

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